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BEFORE THE
Federal Communications Commission

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

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In the Matter of

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AUG 2 1999

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Creation of a Low
Power Radio Service

) MM Docket No. 99-
) RM-9208
) RM-9242
)

TO: Chief, Mass Media Bureau

COMMENTS ON PROPOSED RULE MAKING

These comments are filed in opposition to the *Notice of Proposed Rule Making*, MM Docket No. 99-25, RM-9208, RM-9242, by The Christian Broadcasting Academy, Inc.¹, Radio Training Network, Inc.², and Illinois Bible Institute³ ("Joint Petitioners"). The Commission has requested comments on its proposed establishment of new, low power FM ("LPFM") radio stations.

The Commission's proposed LPFM service would not require LP1000 or LP100 stations to protect second and third adjacent full power channels or translators. Because FM radio markets are already oversaturated in many areas of the country, particularly in the heavily populated areas where LPFM service likely would be concentrated, the lack of second adjacent channel protection could cause devastating interference to existing broadcasters. Although the lack of third adjacent channel

¹ Christian Broadcasting Academy is the licensee of noncommercial station KLYT-FM, Albuquerque, New Mexico as well as numerous FM translators.

² Radio Training Network, Inc. is the licensee of noncommercial stations WJIS(FM), Bradenton, Florida; WLPJ(FM), New Port Richey, Florida; WLFJ(FM), Greenville, South Carolina; WAFJ(FM), Belvedere, South Carolina; KWND(FM), Springfield, Missouri; as well as numerous FM translators.

³ Illinois Bible Institute, Inc. is the licensee of noncommercial stations WIBI(FM), Carlinville, Illinois; WTSG(FM), Carlinville, Illinois; WBGL(FM), Champaign, Illinois; WNLD(FM), Decatur, Illinois; WBMV(FM), Mount Vernon, Illinois; WCIC(FM), Pekin, Illinois; WSCT(FM), Springfield, Illinois; and WCRT(FM), Terre Haute, Indiana; as well as numerous FM translators.

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protection by any given LP100 or microradio service may not cause great damage, the combined interference potential of multiple LP100 and microradio stations operating in the same area is great. Before promulgating LPFM rules, the Commission should assess and quantify the effect of eliminating second and third adjacent channel protection on existing stations, including translators. The Commission should either require all LPFM and microradio stations to provide second and third adjacent channel protection for full power channels and translators, or should limit licensure of LPFM stations so that no such interference would occur, based on detailed studies of interference potential in each area of license.

The Commission's LPFM proposal is not the most narrowly-tailored or effective means to redress industry consolidation or escalating ownership prices, which the Commission purports to address in its proposal. Rather than promote greater diversity of programming, the Commission's proposed LPFM service would hurt existing small stations and translators that already provide diverse programming. This new service should not be created at the expense of existing service and listeners. Perhaps a more effective approach would be to provide incentives for large group owners to spin off stations to would be broadcasters with no media interests.

Furthermore, the Commission's proposal is not adequately designed to achieve its goals, since there is no assurance the new stations are likely to get into the hands of those in greatest need. Indeed, a community voice does not require outright broadcast ownership, given the proliferation of various other types of communications opportunities now available.


If the proposed LPFM service is created, the Commission should give existing translators grandfathered interference protection. Translator owners such as Joint Petitioners would suffer substantial financial hardship if they were to lose their translators--and consequently listeners in

small communities around the coverage areas of the related stations--to LPFM service. This would further exacerbate the difficulty NCE stations already experience in raising funds necessary to operate.

Respectfully submitted,

**THE CHRISTIAN BROADCASTING ACADEMY, INC.
RADIO TRAINING NETWORK, INC.
ILLINOIS BIBLE INSTITUTE**

GAMMON & GRANGE, P.C.
8280 Greensboro Drive, 7th Floor
McLean, VA 22102-3807
(703) 761-5000

By  _____
A. Wray Fitch III
Stephen M. Clarke
Its Counsel

August 2, 1999

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